



JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK  
CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ADVISORY CENTER  
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459-5341



"A Return to Prominence – One Satisfied Customer at a Time"

CPAC INFORMATION BULLETIN  
NUMBER 97

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NSPS INFORMATION  
UPDATE

NSPS Update

**NSPS Impacted by FY 08 NDAA.** Contrary to what you may have heard, the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) is not going away. It is a myth. NSPS has, however, been impacted by the passage of the Fiscal Year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), signed by the President, on 28 January 2008.

While there were changes brought about with the passage of the FY 08, NDAA, most of them will be fairly transparent to you. Among the major changes are:

- **Elimination of the NSPS Adverse Actions and Appeals** authority. This means we will continue to operate under Title 5, Chapters 75 and 77. That is, we will continue to operate under our current legacy rules.
- **Elimination of the NSPS Labor Relations** authority. This means that we will continue to operate under Title 5, Chapter 71. That is, we will continue to operate under our current legacy labor relations rules.
- **Elimination of the NSPS Workforce Shaping** authority. This means that we will continue to operate under Title 5, Chapter 35 and 5 CFR 351. That is, we will continue to operate under our current RIF rules.

- **Referral and selection from the top 3** available candidates are **required for each vacancy filled through the competitive examining process.** That is, the **Rule of 3** will be continued.
- **NSPS employee details are limited to 120-day periods** with detail **extensions limited to 120-day increments.** That is, the current rules will be continued.
- **NSPS employees with a rating above Level 2 (unacceptable) are guaranteed no less than 60 percent of the annual General Pay Increase (GPI) allocated to base pay.** The 40 percent balance is allocated to pay pool funding and paid out as performance-based salary increases.
- **Federal Wage System** (blue collar) and certain DoD laboratory employees **will not spiral into NSPS before 2011.**

Where do we go from here? Over the next several months DoD will be bringing another 57,000 employees under NSPS and continue to align NSPS policy with the new law.

**Fort Polk MSE and MEDDAC Spiral into NSPS.** A total of 157 eligible Mission Support Element and Medical Department Activity employees spiraled into NSPS on 17 February 2008. This brings the number of Fort Polk NSPS employees to 381.

CONTENTS

NSPS Information Update	Page 1	Post-1956 Military Deposit	Page 4
Pay Corner	Page 2	Employee Wellness	Page 5
TSP Corner	Page 2	On Cyber Patrol	Page 6
Holiday/Liberal Leave Schedule CY-2008	Page 3	Did You Know?	Page 7
MEDDAC Holiday/Liberal Leave Schedule FY-2008	Page 4	Articles for Bulletin	Page 7
Training	Page 4		

## \$\$ PAY CORNER \$\$



Control Your Pay With myPay!

*Click on the MyPay Key above to be linked to  
the MyPay System  
Or*

Type into your browser:

<https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>

### "ADDRESS CHANGES"

Any request for address changes should be directed to the Customer Service Representative (CSR), Mona Cauthen, Bldg 412, CPAC or to MyPay.

If an employee elects to update an Address in their myPay account or if the CSR updates the data, all personnel related databases will be updated -- DCPDS, DCPDS, ABC-C, and TSP.

Any request for address change sent only to the CPAC Rear (formerly CPOC) will ONLY update your DCPDS records.

Employees may access information about myPay, via this link: <http://www.dfas.mil/army2/mypay.html>. This link provides information about myPay and instructs how to request a PIN.

## TSP CORNER

### WHAT'S NEW?

**Employee Contributions** — Beginning in 2006, there are no longer any percentage limits on employee contributions to the TSP. TSP contributions will be limited only by the restrictions imposed by the [Internal Revenue Code](#).

**Elective Deferral Limit (I.R.C. Section 402(g))** — The elective deferral limit for 2008 is \$15,500. The limit for 2006 was \$15,000. See the Fact Sheet "[Annual Limit on Elective Deferrals](#)."

**I.R.C. Section 415(c) Limit** — The limit for 2008 is 46,000. The limit for 2007 was \$45,000.

**Catch-up Contributions** — The limit on catch-up contributions for 2008 is \$5,000. It remains the same as the

2007 limit. If you are at least age 50 (or will become age 50 during the calendar year) and if you have made or will make the maximum amount of employee contributions for the calendar year (e.g., \$15,500 in 2008), you may also make catch-up contributions to your TSP account. See the Fact Sheet "[Catch-up Contributions](#)."

Participant statements are on-line in [Account Access](#) on this Web site. Click on [Your TSP Participant Statement](#) for more information.

**Loan interest rate** for new loans is 4.00%.

**Annuity interest rate index:** 4.625% for annuities purchased in February 2008 and 4.375% for March 2008. [Click here](#) for historical annuity interest rates.

**Your account balance** is updated each business day. To access your account balance on this Web site, you will need your TSP account number and your 8-character [Web Password](#). To obtain your account balance from the [ThriftLine](#), you will need your TSP account number and 4-digit TSP Personal Identification Number (PIN).

**Civilian TSP participants who are members of the Ready Reserve** — If you are a civilian TSP participant with an outstanding TSP loan and are placed in non-pay status to perform military service, make sure your agency provides the TSP with documentation to certify your status and suspend loan payments. The Internal Revenue Code allows the TSP to suspend loan payments for all participants placed in non-pay status for up to one year of non-pay. However, participants placed in non-pay status to perform military service for more than one year are authorized suspension of loan payments for the entire period of military service. For more information, see the Fact Sheet [Effect of Nonpay Status on TSP Participation](#).

### TSP RATES OF RETURN

Rates of Return were updated on March 3, 2008

(Figures in parenthesis indicate a negative return)

\*\*\*\*\*

	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund	S Fund	I Fund
February 2008	0.24%	0.24%	(3.28%)	(2.05%)	(0.66%)
Last 12 Months	4.66%	7.52%	(3.59%)	(5.85%)	(0.22%)

(03/01/2007-02/29/2008)

\*The G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns for the last 12 months assume unchanging balances (time-weighting) from month to month, and assume that earnings are compounded on a monthly basis.

	L 2040	L 2030	L 2020	L 2010	L Income
February 2008	(1.80%)	(1.51%)	(1.25%)	(0.59%)	(0.22%)
Last 12 Months	(1.11%)	(0.37%)	0.57%	2.80%	3.50%

(03/01/2007-02/29/2008)

\*The monthly G, F, C, S, and I fund returns represent the change in their respective share prices for the month. The changes in share prices reflect net earnings after accrued TSP administrative expenses have been deducted. The F, C, S, and I fund share prices also reflect the deduction of trading costs and accrued investment management fees.

The TSP is a retirement savings plan for civilian federal employees. The monthly G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns represent the actual total rates used to allocate monthly earnings to participant accounts. Allocations are usually completed by the fourth business day of the month. The returns are shown after deduction of accrued TSP administrative expenses. The F, C, S, and I Fund returns also reflect the deduction of trading costs and accrued investment management fees.

The TSP performance history for the past 12 months can be accessed through the following link:

[http://www.tsp.gov/curinfo/annuity\\_history.html](http://www.tsp.gov/curinfo/annuity_history.html)

### TRANSFERS TO ROTH IRAs

Beginning in January 2008, separated TSP participants and active participants eligible for age based in-service withdrawals started having the option to transfer all or part of their TSP withdrawal payments to a Roth IRA as well as to traditional IRAs or other eligible employer plans. Keep in mind that you must meet eligibility criteria and you must pay tax on any amount that you transfer into a Roth IRA for the year of the transfer. For more information, see the Questions and Answers on the TSP Web site or the TSP Tax Notice "Important Tax Information About Payments From Your TSP Account," available from the TSP Web site or by calling the ThriftLine. We strongly urge you to talk to a tax advisor if you are interested in this option.

### Address Changes with TSP

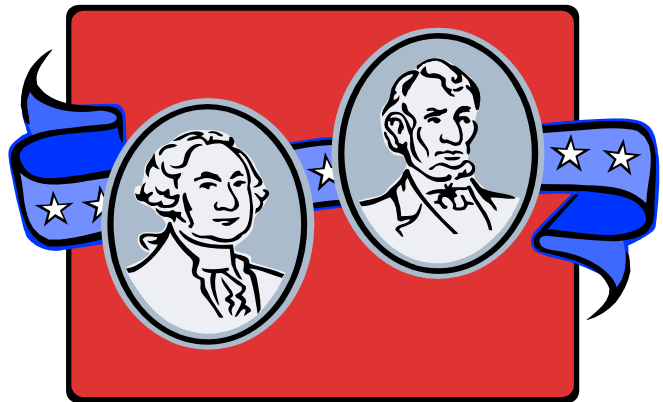
As a result of the account number announcement mailing, TSP has received calls from participants needing to update their addresses. You are reminded that address changes must be made through your Payroll Liaison, Mona Cauthen, or you can make the change through MyPay which will allow you to do so quickly and easily. Please see instructions above under heading **\$\$ PAY CORNER**  
**\$\$ – ADDRESS CHANGES.**

### New Year Reminders

**The TSP must receive your request for a refund of excess 2007 contributions by March 31, 2008.** This applies to you if you contributed more than

\$15,500 in 2007 to the TSP **and another** eligible plan (more than \$20,500 if you also made catch-up contributions). If your excess contributions were put into a civilian **and** a uniformed services TSP account, or if you are a member of the uniformed services and your total tax-deferred and tax-exempt TSP contributions exceeded \$45,000, your refund will be automatic, and you do not need to make a request for a refund.

**For income tax purposes,** monthly payments and other withdrawals that were processed on December 26 and 27, 2007, will be reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as income for 2007. Any withdrawals processed on or after December 28, 2007, will be reported to the IRS as income 2008.



**"No man will ever bring out of the Presidency the reputation which carries him into it."**  
~Thomas Jefferson, letter, 1796~

**President's Day**  
**Monday, 18 February 2008**



### HOLIDAY/LIBERAL LEAVE SCHEDULE FOR CY 2008

<u>Holiday</u>	<u>Date Designated</u>	<u>Training/ Liberal Leave</u>
New Year's Day	01 Jan 2008	31 Dec 2007
MLK's B-Day	21 Jan 2008	22 Jan 2008
President's Birthday	18 Feb 2008	15 Feb 2008
Memorial Day	26 May 2008	23 May 2008
Independence Day	04 Jul 2008	07 Jul 2008

Labor Day	01 Sep 2008	29 Aug 2008
Columbus Day	13 Oct 2008	None Designated
Veterans' Day	11 Nov 2008	None Designated
Thanksgiving Day	27 Nov 2008	None Designated
Christmas Day	25 Dec 2008	None Designated

**MEDDAC**  
**HOLIDAY/LIBERAL LEAVE**  
**SCHEDULE FOR FY 2008**

<b>Holiday</b>	<b>Date Designated</b>	<b>Training/ Liberal Leave</b>
Columbus Day	08 Oct 2007	
Veterans' Day	12 Nov 2007	
Thanksgiving Day	22 Nov 2008	23 Nov 2007
Christmas Day	25 Dec 2007	24 Dec 2007
New Year's Day	01 Jan 2008	31 Dec 2007
MLK's B-Day	21 Jan 2008	
President's Birthday	18 Feb 2008	
Memorial Day	26 May 2008	
Independence Day	04 Jul 2008	03 Jul 2008
Labor Day	01 Sep 2008	

**TRAINING**

**HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) FOR SUPERVISORS  
COURSE**

The HR for Supervisors course was developed by the Civilian Human Resource Agency (CHRA) to train supervisors in their responsibilities for civilian human resources management. This course is offered on a quarterly basis by the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) Staff. Not only are new supervisors encouraged to attend, but this course is an excellent refresher for all supervisors. We encourage all supervisors "new" and "not so new" to attend this course. Remember "continuous learning" is the KEY to Success!

The course covers HR management legal and regulatory requirements, HR processes, HR services and HR automated tools designed to assist supervisors in requesting and tracking personnel actions.

HR for Supervisors is a 4.5 to 5 day course designed to teach civilian and military supervisors of appropriated fund civilian employees about their responsibilities for Civilian Human Resource (CHR) management. The course includes the following modules:

- Overview of Army CHR (includes Merit System Principles and Prohibited Personnel Practices)
- Position Classification (includes an introduction to CHR automated tools such as CPOL Portal)
- Staffing
- Human Resources Development
- Management Employee Relations
- Labor Relations
- Civilians Supervising Military (when the class includes civilian supervisors who supervise military personnel)
- Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA) Presentation
- Safety Presentation
- SJA Presentation
- EEO Presentation
- ASAP Presentation

The dates that we will be conducting the course in FY 08 are as follows:

**23-27 June 2008**

**11-15 August 2008**

Supervisors who are interested in attending or those who may desire additional information should call their servicing HR Specialist at the CPAC, 531-4020/4207.



**Post-1956 Military Deposits**

If you have performed active military duty, including active duty for training, or periods of active duty that may have occurred during your civilian employment, and have not already made the Post 56 deposit, you should consider doing so at this time. An unpaid deposit may impact your retirement eligibility as well as your annuity.

If you are under the CSRS, information can be found at - <https://www.abc.army.mil/Information/ABCRetirement/Information/CSRSPost56.htm> .

If you are FERS, information can be found at - <https://www.abc.army.mil/Information/ABCRetirement/Information/FERSPost56.htm> .

You may also access CPB 07-07 (Retirement Deposits & Post-1956 Military Deposits-Fers) and CPC 08-07 (Retirement Deposits, Redeposits & Post-1956 Military Deposits-CSRS) at our CPAC web page <http://www.jrtc-polk.army.mil/cpac/CPB2007.htm> .



## **EMPLOYEE WELLNESS**

### **BJACH HEALTH AWARENESS**

#### **Staphylococcus aureus or "Staph" Skin Infections**

by Migdalia Machado, LTC, MC, Chief of Preventive  
Medicine Services  
Julihanna Ruch, RN, APHN

Much has been in the news the regarding MRSA or Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus. While this seems to be the new "superbug", MRSA has actually been around for a long time.

Staphylococcus aureus or "staph" as it is commonly referred to, is carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 25%-30% of the population has this bacteria present on their body. Staph bacteria are the most common cause of skin infections in the United States. While most staph infections are easily treated by antibiotics, some staph bacteria are resistant to common antibiotics, as in the case of MRSA. The keys to successful treatment are early identification of resistance and treatment with the correct antibiotics.

Staph skin infections most frequently occur in areas where there have been cuts or abrasions (scrapes). These infections present as red, swollen, sometimes painful, with pus or other drainage. An appointment with a health care provider should be made as soon as possible in order to avoid any future complications.

Simple common hygiene measures will **prevent** almost all person-to-person transmission of these infections.

Preventing the spread of MRSA infections can be accomplished in the following ways:

- **Practice good hygiene** such as keeping your hands clean by washing with soap and water for at least 15-20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Cover your wound** such as abrasions or cuts with clean, dry bandages until healed.
- **Avoid sharing personal items** such as towels, clothing or razors that would come into contact with your skin.
- **Use a barrier** (i.e. towel) between your skin and shared equipment such as weight-training benches.

- **Maintain a clean environment** by cleaning surfaces daily that could come into contact with uncovered infections.

#### **ADVICE FOR TEACHERS/COACHES**

- Refer any children with open draining wounds or infections to the school nurse.
- Enforce proper hand hygiene before eating and after bathroom use.
- Children with open skin wounds should not participate in contact sports.
- If there is any question - refer to a health care provider for further guidance.

#### **TAKE CARE WHEN COOKING WITH MICROWAVE OVENS**

##### **PREVENTIVE MEDICINE SERVICES, ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

Time can often be a precious commodity whether it comes to family, leisure activities or even preparing meals. Fortunately for us the microwave oven is available to help take some of the time out of making dinner. But one has to be careful when using this convenience. If special care is not taken, using a microwave oven as part of your cooking process can lead to possible food borne illness.

Follow these rules when you are cooking:

\* Arrange food items evenly in a covered dish and add some liquid if needed. Cover the dish with a lid or plastic wrap; loosen or vent the lid to let some steam escape. The moist heat that is created will help to eliminate harmful bacteria and promote uniform cooking which is what you want.

\* Do not cook large cuts of meat on high power (100%). You want to cook your food quickly, but not in this case. Large cuts of meat should be cooked on medium power (50%) for longer periods. This will prevent the annoyance of eating food that is overcooked on the outside and frozen in the center.

\* Stir or rotate food midway through the microwaving time to eliminate cold spots where harmful bacteria can survive and ensure more even cooking.

\* When partially cooking food in the microwave oven in preparation for completely cooking it on the grill or oven, transfer the microwaved food to grill immediately. Never partially cook food and store it for later use.

\* Use a thermometer! Failure to cook foods to proper temperature is one of the leading causes of food borne illness.

\* Thawing food can also be a consumer of time. In some cases, thawing can take days. Who wants to wait that long to eat? Again the microwave can help as long as you follow these guidelines:

\* Remove food from packages before defrosting. Do not use foam trays and plastic wraps because they are not heat stable at high temperatures. Melting or warping may cause harmful chemicals to migrate into food.

\* Cook all meats, poultry, and fish immediately after defrosting. Remember: Do not hold partially cooked food to use later.

Once the meal is over it is time to pack up some plates with food to take home and eat later. When it comes time to reheat those refrigerated leftovers in the microwave, make sure that you use these tips:

\* Cover foods with a lid or a microwave-safe wrap to hold in moisture and provide safe, even heating.

\* Heat ready-to-eat foods such as hot dogs, cold cuts, fully cooked ham, and leftovers until steaming hot.

\* After reheating foods in the microwave oven, allow standing time. Then use a clean food thermometer to check that food has reached 165 degrees F.

**For more information or assistance, contact the  
Environmental Health Section, Preventive  
Medicine Service, at 531-4861/4846**

**Even if you're on the right track, you'll get  
run over if you just sit there.**

~ Will Rogers ~

**February 2008 On Cyber Patrol  
Training is Just Common Sense**



It seems so innocent, downloading a game or other entertainment to pass the time during a tedious or stressful deployment. Yet, some of the dangerous cyber-critters that hitch a ride on many of those “fun” downloads make the fleas your dog brought home last summer seem like a welcome addition to the household.

Unauthorized downloads from unsecured sources expose your computer, your network, your data, your communications and everyone that depends on them to unnecessary danger. Some of these threats are only as annoying as fleabites. Others can bring down an entire network and delete or destroy mission critical data. Unfortunately, some people will never consider this a threat until it happens to them. Some recent incidents might make all of us reconsider that mind set.

A soldier at a military installation bypassed security safeguards on an Army computer to download and install a pirated version of a popular computer game. The pirated game included a malicious code that, without the user's knowledge, caused the computer to launch denial of service attacks against a computer in a foreign country. This was only discovered because of routine internal security procedures. Hijacking computers via hidden code in innocent appearing software is a typical cyber terrorism tactic. Unfortunately, it is a very successful ploy because people continue to download without regard to potential cyber threats. This might be somewhat understandable for a naïve cyber newbie. However, for military personnel operating under rules and regulations (AR 25-2 for example) designed to prevent this, it is unforgivable.

Still, downloading a pirated game is an innocent activity in comparison to other situations. For example, an Army computer user downloaded extremely inappropriate and very illegal content over an extended period of time. This criminal activity infected the computer with a virus that quickly spread to shared network folders and wiped out a considerable amount of files. Once the results of the viral attack were discovered, an internal investigation isolated and eliminated the virus and led to the capture (and we can assume prosecution) of the culprit.

These examples are just two of many – far too many – occurrences of improper downloads leading to destructive and malicious consequences. Hidden code can not only infect a network or hijack a computer for remote attacks, it can also secretly transmit keystrokes or communications that lead to the compromise of sensitive data. It can render expensive and mission-critical computer resources useless. While there are well-trained and very diligent personnel constantly ferreting out these dangers, the amount of time, effort and resources it requires to clean up after a download-caused incident is an unnecessary and very preventable waste.

Unauthorized downloads are not simply a matter of bending the rules a little or getting away with some inconsequential mischief. The fact is that this activity is a fast track to cyber danger that can put critical military operations and personnel at risk.

### Did you Know?

On average, you speak almost 5,000 words a day - although almost 80% of speaking is self-talk (talking to yourself).

The muscle that lets your eye blink is the fastest muscle in your body. It allows you to blink 5 times a second. On average, you blink 15 000 times a day. Women blink twice as much as men.

On average, you breathe 23,000 times a day.

Over the last 150 years the average height of people in industrialized nations increased by 10 cm (4 in).

## ARTICLES FOR BULLETIN

If you have any suggestions on topics or issues that you would like addressed in future bulletins, please submit them to one of the following:

1. [Janette.Nolde@us.army.mil](mailto:Janette.Nolde@us.army.mil)
2. Call 531-1847

Suggestions will be reviewed and addressed if at all possible.

**DONALD R. MALLETT**  
Director, Civilian Personnel  
Advisory Center